

# THE PARISH MESSENGER

A PERSONAL VISITOR TO THE PARISHES

VOLUME 11

WINNIPEG, MAN., DECEMBER, 1955

NUMBER 2

## THE STEWARDSHIP SECRETARY SPEAKS—

Our United Lutheran Church in America has adopted Evangelism as its major effort for the next two years, 1956-57. This program of Evangelism is designed to be carried out in every congregation (some 4,000 altogether) of our U.L.C.A. in both Canada and the U.S. **What is Evangelism?** Here is the best definition I have found: "Evangelism is . . . reaching outside the Church to bring people to faith in Christ and membership in His Church." (George E. Sweazey in **EFFECTIVE EVANGELISM**.)

As the program is planned, it should affect every member of our Church. Many members will be doing the actual work of Evangelism; that is, calling on people, speaking to them about the Christian faith, and inviting them to come to Church. Of course, someone will ask, "Isn't this the minister's job?" Yes, it is **part** of his job. But one of the main reasons that Christianity spreads so slowly is that he is left to do the job all alone. Evangelism is not and never was a one man job. For the basic, scriptural plan of Evangelism read Luke 10:1-24. It tells there how He chose 70 disciples (all laymen), gave them thorough and inspiring instruction about what to do and what to say, and dividing them into pairs He assigned them to definite geographical areas. Then He "sent them on ahead of Him, two by two, into every town and place where He Himself was about to come." This is New Testament Evangelism; exactly the kind our United Lutheran

Church will endeavor to set into practice in every congregation.

Actually it is a shame that we have to set aside two years for the emphasis of the kind of work that should be going on continually in all our congregations! Are we so far from the faith and practice of the early Christian Church that we have forgotten that a believing disciple and a silent disciple are a contradiction of terms? Are we so thoroughly deadened by the spirit of our modern world that we no longer carry the unbelief of our neighbor as a burden on our conscience? Then it is time for the Church to wake us up, set us straight, and send us out!

Maybe you are afraid, as I once was, that "Evangelism" is just a 25c word for stirring up the emotions of people, only to leave them with a burnt-out caricature of the Christian faith. Thank God that is not the kind of Evangelism our Church practices! We are given a detailed program for:

- a) Getting those who have been passing the Church by to stop and hear the Church's message (the Gospel).
  - b) Educating those who give evidence of interest. They need to know the facts of the faith, and how it works in individual lives.
  - c) Getting people to make a commitment of faith in Jesus Christ as their Lord and Saviour, and
- (Continued on Page 16)

A Blessed Christmas — 1955

A Prosperous New Year — 1956

## THE PARISH MESSENGER

News Journal of the Icelandic  
Evangelical Lutheran Synod of  
America.

Printed quarterly in Winnipeg, Manitoba.

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## When Do We Live Successfully?

By DR. H. SIGMAR

In St. John's Gospel, and its 14th chapter, which is both well known and beloved by many people, we have certain words by Christ himself that are very precious: "I am the way, and the truth, and the life; no one cometh to the Father but by me." When we hear such words from his own lips, it seems imperative to accept Him as our Lord and Saviour.

Those words, from his own lips, bring comfort and assurance to our hearts, as we approach the glorious Christmastide.

What should we plan to do for our own souls, and the souls of our fellowmen, when we receive such a message from our Saviour? I am convinced that we should become more thrilled about our Christianity, than we usually are. His message **should** bring deeper and more consuming joy to our souls. That does not mean that I favor the undue excitement and clamour that religion seems to bring to some people. But it means that we should give more zest and more **joyous** consent to our faith, not more excitement, but a deeper thrill that produces the will to worship, the will to serve, the will to contribute to Christianity among men, and the will to sacrifice so that Christianity may gain more and more faithful followers.

If we are able to add to our enthusiasm, Christmas, and its message will mean much more to us than before, and we will learn to rejoice in the message and joy, rather than in its trappings and outward glitter.

**"Christ, Our Saviour Is Born":**  
That should be our particular glory song at Christmas.

If we catch the spirit of Christmas, and learn to realize what the real Christmas message tells us, we will be able to take that message and spirit with us into the coming days, and the coming years.

When do we really live successfully and joyously? We do that when we have found the real message, which Christmas brings, and when we have learned to make that message work in our lives, and have mastered the art of conveying it to others. — We live successfully and joyously, when the Saviour has become precious and indispensable to our hearts.

Jesus said: "I am the way, the truth, and the life; no one cometh to the Father but by me." These are solemn words—very solemn.

Nothing in the world is more important for us to know, than what those words tell us. It is important at Christmas—always important.

Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of light, with Whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning.

—James 1:17.

## EPIPHANY 1956

Lutherans!  
Bring more  
smiles to Malaya

GOAL—

\$85,000



## "LUTHERAN EVANGELISM MISSION"

ERIC H. SIGMAR, Chairman,  
Evangelism Committee, Icelandic Synod.

Recently the people of our Synod have heard a great deal of talk about "Evangelism". Evangelism was the main theme of our synodical convention last summer in Gimli. Our convention slogan was an evangelistic text: "Launch out into the deep . . . be ye fishers of men". One entire evening's program was dedicated to the theme of "Evangelism". And one of the important convention committees was "The Evangelism Committee". Since relatively few of you readers have seen the "Proceedings" of our 1955 convention I would like to quote to you some of the recommendations of this committee: "The Evangelism Committee recommends that the Icelandic Synod:

1. Endorse and pledge its cooperation and support to the Evangelism program of the United Lutheran Church in America.
4. Call upon each congregation to participate in the Evangelism Program by enlarging its present Evangelism committee or appointing a special Evangelism committee.
5. Instruct the President of Synod to appoint a Synod Committee on Evangelism to serve throughout the coming year so that the Evangelism Program will be effectuated to the highest degree possible."

According to the secretary's minutes of the proceedings: "a very lively and constructive discussion (regarding the whole program of Evangelism) followed, and the report was enthusiastically adopted."

We see from the above paragraph that our various congregation delegates unanimously and enthusiastically endorsed and adopted the Evangelism Program of our U.L.C.A., and pledged our Synod's support of this great program of trying to win more people to Christ through this joint and concerted effort. This two-year cooperative program of Evangelism is called the "Lutheran Evangelism

Mission". Just what is it all about?

First of all, I think, perhaps, that we need to start at the grass roots and define "Evangelism". There is so much talk about that word, that confusion has arisen as to just what it means. Most simply stated, Evangelism is: our response to our Lord's command to "go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature." That "creature" might well be your next-door neighbor! In other words Evangelism means: **winning people for Christ and His Church.** Whenever men are seized by the Christian Gospel they find no course open to them but to bear witness. In many walks of life men are unwitting salesmen, paying their testimony to a fine doctor, a successful remedy, a helpful gadget, a new car, a political idea, a great cause. Once they have been caught by it ("sold on it", is the business term), they are bound to become witnesses. Similarly, when men are Christians, they will use every persuasive power at their command to draw others to their Lord and Saviour. Such witness-bearing we call "Evangelism".

Now you might say, "well, Evangelism is simply the constant work of the Church; why do we then have to have a special 'program' to carry out this year-around activity of our church?" The answer is, unfortunately, clear: There is no church in our synod, or in any synod, that is witnessing as it could or should; and even though people are being won for Christ in greater numbers today than ever before, there are thousands, and millions, right in our own North America, who do not know Christ and His saving grace. The answer is clear: We need a co-operative, tried and tested "program" to harness all of us, pastors and lay people, to go out and win more people for our Lord. Christ gave to the disciples, and through them to us, the responsibility of proclaiming the Gospel. No one can transfer this witness to someone else. You can-

## Gardar Congregation 75 Years Old

By MRS. JOHN MYRDAL, GARDAR.

The congregation of the Gardar Lutheran Church celebrated the 75th anniversary of its founding at a worship service on Sunday, December 4th. The service was conducted by Rev. Olafur Skulason, who preached the sermon from the text: "For from him and through him and to him are all things. To him be glory for ever." (Rm. 11, 36) The sermon dealt with the theme, "Learn from the past, live in the present and prepare for the future."

Music for the service was provided by a 25-voice choir under the direc-

tion of Theo. Thorleifsson. Mrs. Wm. Olgeirsson of Mountain was the organist. The choir sang two anthems: "The King of Love my Shepherd Is", and the Icelandic anthem, "Lattu Guds hond pig leida nu". Mrs. M. Goodman was the soloist.

Two dozen hymnals were dedicated in memory of the late M. S. Gudmundson, a long time worker in the Gardar church.

The members of the Ladies Aid served at a coffee hour which followed the service. A three-tiered anniversary cake and replica of the

not pay someone to do it for you, not even your pastor. Every Christian is an evangelist. By the nature of your belief in God you are an ambassador for Christ. Because you claim Christ as Saviour, He claims YOU as witness.

And so, this "Lutheran Evangelism Mission" of our Church, is a "preaching, reaching, teaching" mission, a co-operative program to be used in every congregation of our synod and of all synods of the U.L.C.A. to reach the un-churched. It is a program that has been tried in many congregations and areas with great success. Wherever it has been followed, IT HAS WORKED. This article's length does not permit me to go into the details of the program, but I hope to do so in a continuing article in the next "Messenger". Briefly though, let me say this about it: Every congregation selects an "Evangelism Committee" of three to five members. They study the program, (and there is abundant literature available from our U.L.C.A. Department of Evangelism). The congregation decides to have an "Evangelism Mission Week" in co-operation with the other U.L.C.A. congregations in its area. This is called an "Area Mission". During this week, each congregation has a visiting "Evangelist" or guest preacher, who preaches each night in an attempt to help win people for Christ and the Church. These people who come to the services are the

congregation itself who benefit by the inspiration of these services, AND the people who have been visited as prospective church members. In preparation for this "Area Mission Week", a large prospective list has been gathered by pastor, Evangelism Committee, council, etc. Homes adjacent to the church that have not been visited for years, if ever, are the main source of prospective church members. All during the "Mission Week" prospects are called on by teams of lay visitors from the congregation. The congregation has been geared to a high pitch of enthusiasm in this co-operative effort. Each morning all local pastors and "missioners" (visiting preachers) meet for comparing results and study of Evangelism methods, etc. Lay visitors meet briefly each evening for discussion and preparation for the next night's visits, which usually last from 6.45 to 7.45 p.m. (before the evening service). At the end of the week a large rally is held for all churches joined in the "Area Mission".

The sketchy outline above of the "program" will be amplified in the next "Parish Messenger". The "Area Mission" centres where our synod's congregations will participate are: Winnipeg, Gimli, Cavalier, and Seattle. More dates and details will be given all congregations later. In the meantime, let each congregation vote to go into this program. This is the Lord's work. It is OUR work.

church decorated the serving table. The lunch included kleinur, vinar-tetur and brown bread sandwiches.

Rev. Skulason read two letters from former pastors of the congregation. The Rev. H. S. Sigmar, D.D., of Blaine, Wash., sent his affectionate greetings to the congregation, which he had served almost 20 years. Rev. K. K. Olafsson of Rock City, Ill., recalled how closely his life had been tied to that of the congregation. He had been born in 1880, the year the congregation was organized, and was one of the first to be baptized and confirmed in the Gardar church. He also served the congregation as pastor for 21 years. Also in his letter he said, about the early pioneers, "I was impressed by the deep reverence of the group and how seriously they took their religion. I count it a great privilege to have come in contact with the spirit of the pioneer Christian life which prevailed with the fathers and mothers which built up this church at great sacrifice."

He also said, "I am grateful that after the turbulent years that passed over the community union was brought about. It is my prayer that the last vestiges of those days of strife may disappear by the church again becoming a constituent part of the Icelandic Lutheran Synod."

Stefan Helgason, president of the Board of Trustees, read a history of the congregation which had been written by Mrs. J. K. Olafsson. She told how the congregation had been organized in the fall of 1880 at the suggestion of Rev. Pall Thorlaksson of Mountain. "... On November 24th, 1880, a meeting was held to consider the matter with Rev. Thorlaksson as chairman. At that meeting a congregation was organized, a constitution drafted, a call to serve as minister was tendered Rev. Thorlaksson, who accepted it, and a sum of \$50 was subscribed towards the maintenance of the work. Thus the first Icelandic congregation in North Dakota came into existence."

## The Unique Functions of the Christian Church

From time to time people ask, "What is the unique reason for the church's existence?"

Here are five specific reasons:

**First**, and above all, the church is here to afford us a place for regular, public, corporate worship. No other institution on earth gives us this privilege. Only here do we find a common approach to God in adoration, praise, thanksgiving, petition, commitment: all of the attitudes which men feel toward God but which are expressed most forcefully when they are done in a group.

**Second**, within the church membership we experience Christian fellowship between all kinds, types and ages of people. This fellowship is one that has as its central focus a love of God and love of men. No other institution finds its source of fellowship in a primary relation to God which inevitably makes all of us members of one family.

**Third**, the church is unique in that it is the one place where the imperative of bringing the gospel to all the people is linked with the neces-

sity of training each individual through adequate nurture. This means that the church is the place where evangelism and education go hand in hand.

**Fourth**, the church is the institution which affords us our best means of Christian service through the stewardship of our talents, our financial resources, our prayers and our participation. This is the focal point for the use of these many gifts which God has given us in ways which we believe will help fulfill the Kingdom of God on earth.

**Fifth**, the church is unique because in it we give witness to the lordship of Jesus. Jesus is the person who gives us our interpretation of everything that we value in life. He is the source of all of our moral judgments. He is the personal friend who is able to guide us in our decisions. No other institution has as its primary responsibility the social and personal dedication to such common loyalty.

(An Oakland, Calif., friend of the Editor, George Warmer, Jr.)



## Remarks Made at Laymen's Service, Oct. 30, 1955

By DR. F. SCRIBNER, Gimli, Man.

Many of you are no doubt wondering what is the purpose of this service, why this departure from the usual routine of things. It is not, as it seems, a pretext to give our pastor a holiday from his usual duties.

This Sunday is the anniversary of Reformation day, and the beginning of a two-year Evangelistic program by the Lutheran Church.

Reformation day, as you all know, is the day that Martin Luther openly defied the edicts of the then great spiritual leader of Christendom. He nailed his challenge to the door of his church, and, as a result of his excommunication for this defiance, there was begun that great Protestant movement that bears his name.

Not only do we today, celebrate the anniversary of the Reformation, but also the anniversary of religious worship in this community; for, eighty years ago, almost to this very day, a church service was held by the pioneers of this district, not very far from this spot. That service was conducted, as many were later on, by a layman. The services of a pastor were not available in the early days of this settlement.

I would like to say at this point, how proud and honored, we, the group who are conducting this service here this evening, are, to have had the privilege of commemorating this event, by this anniversary service.

We, who stand before you tonight, are publicly witnessing, and reaffirming our faith in this church, and the Christian faith, and you, the members of this congregation by the very fact of your presence here tonight, are doing likewise.

So many people seem to think that the church is an institution for clergymen alone, this is definitely not the case. The Christian church was created for us, for you, and for me, the lay people of the church. It was created that we might have life, and have it more abundantly.

Like everything else we do, we are able to get out of our secular

life only what we put into it. It is not enough to join the church, become a member of the congregation, and then sit back and expect the spirit of the Almighty to encompass you in some miraculous way. You must work at it. Take an active part in its development and maintenance, give of your material means, give of your time and talents, and above all, give of yourself, to the principles for which the church stands.

The church is the only institution that I know of that gives more than it receives. For you will find that everything you do in its name, you will sooner or later be rewarded a thousand-fold in spiritual satisfaction.

We, the laymen of the church must recognize and accept our responsibility, and having done so, our efforts, coupled with those of our pastor, can have only one result, new and greater accomplishments.

I would like to close these few words this evening with a short passage of what I think is profound philosophy, which appeared recently in our Parish Messenger.

I asked God for strength that I might achieve—I was made weak, that I might learn humbly to obey.

I asked for help that I might do greater things—I was given infirmity, that I might do better things.

I asked for riches, that I might be happy—I was given poverty, that I might be wise.

I asked for all things that I might enjoy life—I was given life that I might enjoy all things.

I got nothing that I asked for—but everything that I hoped for.

Despite myself, my prayers were answered. I am among all men, most richly blessed.

The pastor needs to have all his laymen behind him, and, on Sunday—BEFORE him.

## PARISH NEWS FLASHES

### *The Selkirk Parish*

This fall and winter the activities in the Selkirk Lutheran Church have been along the usual lines. Morning services (English) have been well attended. The evening congregation (Icelandic), larger than last year. As before, the evening service of the third Sunday of the month is under the auspices of the Young People, the laymen conducting the service and giving the message, the Sunday School Choir and organist in attendance.

Both Junior and Senior Ladies Aids have been active as before. The former having added many new members to their roster.

The Missionary Society work in their quiet strength to build up interest in missionary work.

Sunday School enrolment is similar as before. Besides the pastor and his wife there are three men and 13 ladies on the Sunday School staff.

A larger enrolment in the Confirmation class this year than any previous year is very encouraging.

A beautiful Christmas pageant, "A Promise Fulfilled" will be presented by Senior Sunday School classes Sunday, December 18. While Junior and Primary classes will present their Christmas concert on Christmas Eve.

Communion services, morning and evening, were held November 27th. At the morning service new members were welcomed into the congregation.

### *The Blaine Parish*

Through the summer and fall all branches of the Blaine Lutheran Church have been active. The Sunday School has been well attended and its superintendent, Mrs. Ed Kimball, and teachers and children, are now busily engaged in preparing a Christmas program to be given Sunday evening, December 18th.

The Luther League is active and busy helping with special projects. They had a successful Roller Skating party this fall and several picnics through the summer.

The Junior Lutheran Ladies Aid

will be enjoying their annual Christmas party December 8th. Instead of an exchange of gifts among members this year, each member is bringing a gift for a child at the Parkland Lutheran Children's Home in Everett, Wash.

Members of the choir and the church congregation planned a birthday party for their pastor, Dr. H. Sigmar, which took place Thursday evening, October 20th, after choir practice in the Parish Hall. Dr. Sigmar was presented with a beautifully decorated cake in the form of an open Bible. On its pages was the inscription, "Happy Birthday to our Pastor, On His Seventieth Birthday". Mrs. Sigmar cut the cake, which was served with coffee. Special guests present that evening were the Sigmar's son and small daughter, Rev. H. S. Sigmar and Lo Anne, from Kelso, Wash.

On Wednesday evening, November 24th, we had a United Thanksgiving Service at our church. Dr. H. Sigmar conducted the service and our guest speaker was Rev. Evan David of the Congregational Church in Blaine, also assisting was Rev. Clarence Lund of the Methodist Church. The Senior Choir of the church sang and a special number, "Thanks Be To God", by O'Reilly, was sung by our soloist, Mrs. Halldor Johnson. Mrs. Sigmar was accompanist for the service.

### *The Argyle Parish*

We regret that our news reporter, Miss Sina Gunnlaugson of Baldur, is hospitalized. We wish her a speedy recovery.

The four congregations of our parish decided, this year as last year, not to have suppers, sales or programs for church fund raising but appeal for direct contributions. We have been richly rewarded.

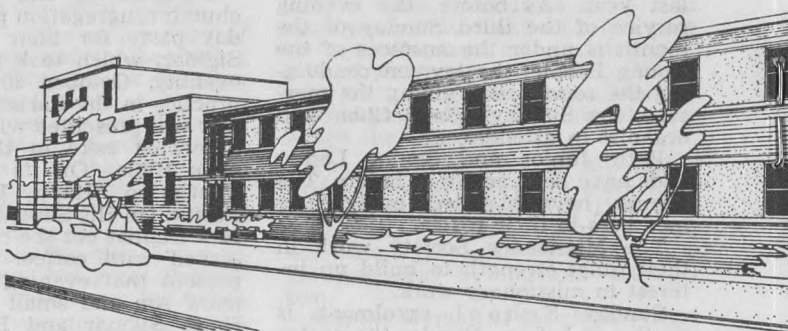
All the Sunday School teachers are busy preparing for Christmas. The children will have a special Christmas service, directed by the teachers. They will sing Christmas carols, recite prayers, tell the Christ-

(Continued on Page 10)

BET

## "The Home of the

By P. H. T. THORLAKSON,



Present and Prop

Betel, our Home for the aged and infirm, must be renovated and enlarged without delay. A serious fire in the old structure would be a shocking calamity. Such a tragedy would be a stark reminder that we had acted too late. Fifty-nine aged people are being accommodated in the Home. Of these, six have occupied rooms in the basement and twelve on the third floor. These sections of the building are not safe for old people and their continued use places an unfair burden and responsibility on the staff.

The Home urgently requires renovation of the first and second floors. We must also install labor-saving equipment and nursing conveniences to allow the members of the staff to devote more of their time to the personal needs of the old folk, many of whom are blind and ailing.

A great change has gradually taken place since the Home was first opened in 1914. During the first years, most of the residents could attend to their personal needs, do

necessary work in and around the Home; milk the cows and tend the gardens. These younger "old folk" provided the home with much of its food and performed many of the tasks necessary to the Home. Now, the average age of the occupants is 86 years. As 20 are partially or totally blind and as many as 15-20 are bedridden, they require constant medical and nursing attention. Betel has changed to a great extent from an Old Folks' Residence into a Nursing Home.

The Board of Directors seriously considered the drastic step of reducing occupancy from 59 to 40 residents. The needs of those now in the Home, together with a long waiting list of applicants, forced the decision to recommend a program of expansion and improvement rather than accept one of retrenchment and defeat. With the renovation of the second floor, with safe and improved accommodations, and an additional 50 units in a new extension, the real increase in occupancy will be substantial.

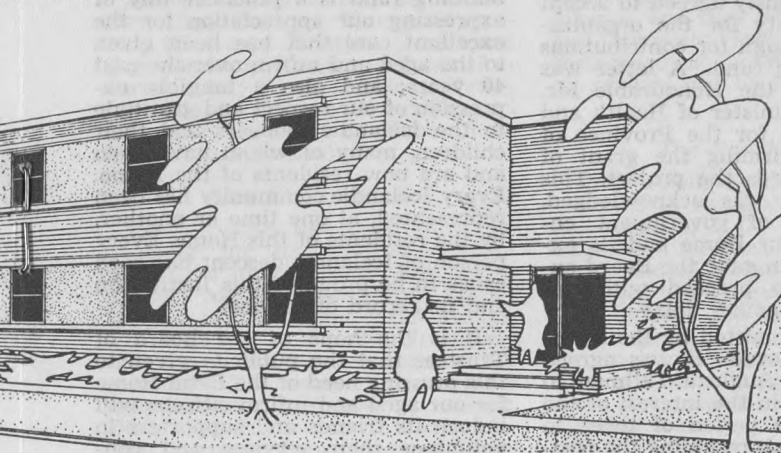
\*The late Dr. David A. Stewart of Ninette Sanatorium wrote an article on Betel under this title in 1933.



# TEL

## ne Happy Sunset''\*

N, M.D., Campaign Chairman



### Proposed Extension

Having arrived at this important decision, the Board of directors now fervently hope that there will be general approval and support for a campaign for necessary funds.

Our first responsibility must always be to those elderly people who have reached an advanced age without sufficient means to provide the basic comforts of life. Our organization exists primarily for them. However, there are an increasing number of our elderly people who have acquired a degree of financial independence but nevertheless wish to enjoy the security and comfort of the Home. These applicants for admission should be encouraged to contribute to the building fund. A few may wish to deposit an amount sufficient to pay for a unit to be used by them for the remaining years of their lives.

There will be fifty furnished rooms in the new addition equipped with individual toilet facilities at a cost of \$130,000.00. To this must be added the cost of renovation of the present building to include adequate sitting-rooms, dining-room, library, kitchen, laundry and administrative

services, and furnishings for the new rooms. Obviously, for aged and infirm people, rooms without these other important services are of little value. The total cost will approximate \$180,000.00.

The Government of Manitoba has made a grant of \$42,500.00 towards the construction of an extension to the building. This grant covers the cost, in our total program of expansion and renovation, of 12 complete units. We must now turn to the generosity of the people of the Icelandic communities to contribute the capital for the balance, that is, 38 new units **including the ancillary services.**

The above figure of 38 units at \$3,600.00 each should be our objective without depleting the Pathfinder's Fund, which now stands at \$37,000.00. This amount is not an adequate reserve for a large institution and should be kept intact for emergency purposes.

However, if the campaign should fail to reach the objective (and this should not occur) then a maximum of \$28,000.00 for eight units could be transferred to the building fund,

leaving 30 complete units of \$108,000.00 to be financed by immediate public subscription.

At a meeting of the Board of Directors held in the Betel Home in Gimli on Saturday, October 8, 1955, it was unanimously agreed to accept the responsibility for the organization of a campaign for contributions to our building fund. A letter was received from the Honourable Mr. R. W. Bend, Minister of Health and Public Welfare for the Province of Manitoba, confirming the grant of \$42,500.00 towards the project. This generous offer was acknowledged. This evidence of government endorsement for our Home and its expansion program gave the Board encouragement to proceed with our plans without further delay.

The plans submitted by the architect were approved. It was agreed to ask Mrs. J. Augusta Tallman to work full-time in the interest of the campaign for a period of three to six months before resuming the position of Matron to which she has been appointed. A Campaign Chairman was elected and authority given to proceed with the necessary organization.

While the Betel Home has been operated under the aegis of the Icelandic Lutheran Synod, its doors

have been thrown open to all aged Icelandic people irrespective of church affiliation. The Home, therefore, has just claim on the support and generosity of the entire Icelandic community. A contribution to the building fund is a practical way of expressing our appreciation for the excellent care that has been given to the aged and infirm over the past 40 years; and also a tangible expression of our respect and gratitude to the Icelandic pioneers and their children, many of whom have been and are now residents of the Home. Every Icelandic community has been represented, at one time or another, by the residents of this Home. Every person of Icelandic descent has good cause to be proud of this Institution and its record of service.

It is the hope of the Board of Trustees that the publicity given to this pressing need of the Betel Home for our aged and infirm citizens will induce its friends and supporters to volunteer their services and contributions. We should plan to lay the foundation of the new Home in the Spring of 1956.

The extent to which the Board can make provisions for the present and the future residents of the Home can only equal the generosity of your response to this appeal.

## PARISH NEWS FLASHES

(Continued from Page 7)

mas story and present a pageant. It is inspiring to hear the youngest members of the congregation tell, in their own way, the Christmas story.

Our pastor was appointed delegate to the Canadian Chamber of Commerce 26th Annual Meeting held in Winnipeg, October 3-6. He gave an interesting report to the local Chamber on the main subjects of discussion at the convention: "The Problems of Agriculture", "The Problems of Trade", and "Theology and Trade".

We are preparing for the evangelism mission of the Synod. We pray it may be a great success throughout the whole country and revive us spiritually.

A new hospital will be opened officially in Glenboro on December 8th. Dr. M. Elliot, Deputy Minister

of Health and Public Welfare; R. C. Goodman, Executive Secretary of Manitoba Hospital Association; E. R. Rafuse, Director of Hospitalization, Department of Health and Public Welfare; the local executives, the hospital staff and the local pastors will partake in the official opening of this house of mercy. The 11-bed five-ward hospital is equipped and furnished with modern equipment to offer good facilities and accommodations for patients and staff members. There is ample accommodation for doctors' offices, reception room, a public health room and other necessary rooms as required in the operation of a medical unit.

The former medical nursing home of Glenboro will be converted into an old people's home for the community. All organizations in our community have donated liberally to our local hospital.

Church services were cancelled twice in November on account of blizzards and impassable roads. Snow plows have opened all the main roads and the country roads are being cleared.

Recent deaths in our parish are: Mrs. Inga Beatrice Thorey Sigurdson, Glenboro; Kristjan Sveinbjorn Gudmundson, Glenboro; Jonas Anderson, Bru; Edward Antony Peterson (infant), Cypress River; Tryggvi Sigurdson, Glenboro; Ruth Joan Hallgrimson (infant), Bru.

### *The Gimli Parish*

Gimli parish has been busy organizing for its winter activities under our new pastor. Rev. Fridriksson has organized the Luther League in boys' and girls' groups, which gather at the church weekly and also hold their regular monthly meetings. The executive committee is as follows: Girls' group: president, Doris Howard; secretary, Evelyn Isfeld; treasurer, Joanna Stevens. Boys' group: president, John Toy; secretary, Gordon Albertson; treasurer, Robert Holm. Mr. Art Seaby will be the leader of the boys, and the pastor hopes to find a leader for the girls shortly.

Gimli parishioners enjoyed a fine program recently when Mrs. H. F. Danielson spoke on the Utah centennial, and Mrs. Kristine Johnson showed colored slides on the same subject.

Pastor Fridriksson has begun arranging fellowship hours once a month at Betel Old Folks' Home, inviting old people who live alone to attend a program and social hour at which both residents and outsiders perform in some way. A church group supplies the lunch. He has also begun to hold regular afternoon services in Icelandic in addition to the two regular English services. The Sunday School and morning worship service has been combined, with the children at 2.00. The first half hour of the service in the church, from 10.30 to 11.00 a.m., and then retiring to the lower auditorium for their classes while the adults and young people have a discussion period on the lesson. The kindergarten is continuing to operate two afternoons a week under the leader-

ship of Mrs. J. H. Menzies, assisted by Mrs. George Johnson and Mrs. Ron Johnstone, and there are about 30 children enrolled.

Gimli parish has heard with regret of the illness of the editor of *The Parish Messenger*, Rev. S. O. Thorlaksson, and they wish him a speedy and complete recovery, and send their warmest Christmas greetings to all readers of *The Messenger*.

### *The Svold Parish*

Peter's Congregation was well represented at the installation services at Mountain, N.D., September 18th, at which time Rev. Olafur Skulason was installed as pastor of the seven churches of our area.

In October, members of the Svold Parish gathered at the Svold Hall for an informal party honoring the Rev. and Mrs. Olafur Skulason. Rev. and Mrs. Steve Guttormsson of Cavalier were guests. The guest book was in charge of Mrs. Dori Hillman. Mrs. Bob Sturlaugson acted as mistress of ceremonies. The community singing was led by Mrs. Oscar Sturlaugson accompanied by Mrs. Margaret Goodman. Talks were given by Rev. Guttormsson and Rev. Skulason. Everyone joined in the games and stunts after which Mrs. Garnet Mountain presented a box of money from those assembled to Rev. and Mrs. Skulason. Mrs. Eldon Hillman made the presentation of the Svold Ladies Aid gift, which was a beautiful floor lamp. Rev. and Mrs. Skulason responded with well chosen words. Lunch was served at the close of the evening.

On Sunday evening, November 6, the following young people were confirmed in our church: Arthur Hillman, Mary Beth Dinusson, Phyllis Scheonheit, John Klindt, William Pleasance and Carol Ann Pleasance. Rev. Skulason's sermon was a most inspiring message to the confirmants and all who heard it. Many received communion.

Our Thanksgiving Service was held November 20th.

Ronald Thordarson, son of Mr. and Mrs. Larus Thordarson, was recently released from the U.S. Navy and is now visiting his parents before going to Seattle, Washington, to

work. Pvt. Robert L. Sturlaugson, of the U.S. Army, has been ordered to Korea, while Pvt. William Thorsteinson is serving in Germany.

### *The Minneota Parish*

The Junior Luther League of St. Paul's is gathering and repairing toys to be given to children of destitute families at Christmas. They are working under the devoted and capable leadership of Mr. Daren Gislason.

Miss Lorraine Ousman, superintendent of St. Paul's Sunday School, reports that teachers and pupils are very well pleased with the new Christian Growth Series of Sunday School lessons. They are preparing a new kind of Christmas program, and the rest of us are looking forward to it with high expectations.

St. Paul's choir resumed its work with several new members this fall. Our organist is Miss Jennie Frost.

When Pastor Stefan Guttormsson, Stewardship Secretary of our Synod, visited us this fall and told us about the good work that the Lutheran Brotherhood is doing in his parish up in North Dakota, we felt constrained to go and do likewise. We held a meeting of the men of St. Paul's early in November to see what could be done. We had with us Pastor George Dressler of Albert Lea, Minn., who gave us a lot of information and urged us to go ahead. The Icelanders like to look before they leap; but sometimes they just keep looking. Anyway, we went ahead and held a second meeting December 5th. Val Bjornson was our guest speaker. The meeting unanimously voted to organize a single Brotherhood unit for the whole parish. We start with about thirty members.

Walter Jonason, a noted building contractor and a former member of St. Paul's, bequeathed to our church a sum of five hundred dollars. With this money we have bought wall board for lining the walls of the nave. The work is being carried out by the men of the congregation during the Advent season.

Three years ago St. Paul's people bought an electric organ with money given in memory of deceased members. Since that time many memo-

rial gifts have provided our church with several beautiful appointments. Among these are two crosses, a large one for the church altar and a smaller one for the Sunday School altar, in memory of Mrs. Alice Schultz; a missal stand, in memory of Pastor Carl Olson; a small altar for the Sunday School, in memory of Ludwig Westdal Oddson and other members; a Christ picture over this altar bought with the St. Paul's Aid's Memorial Fund; and gifts in memory of Mrs. Gudfinna Askdal will in the near future furnish the main altar with a pair of brass candelabra.

### *The Vancouver Parish*

There is general progress evident in the life of our congregation. The church building project is a matter of heartfelt concern to our people. Even though we have been and are happy in our association with our Danish friends, we rejoice in the anticipation of OUR OWN CHURCH HOME. The construction proceeds without interruption, although the building will not be ready for use until later this winter. Mr. Carl Finnbogason, well known to many people in Winnipeg, is the construction foreman. Mr. Jon Sigurdsson is the chairman of the building committee, while Mr. L. H. Thorlaksson is the chairman of the Board of Trustees, and also chairman of the finance committee. If anyone, reading these lines, should feel constrained to relieve himself of a few dollars toward our church building project, all you have to do is to contact Mr. Thorlaksson! Public services are conducted every Sunday in the Danish church, and every other Sunday at Hofn Old Folks Home. The Young People's Society carries on under the direction of Mr. Jon Gislason, its president; meetings are held every other Sunday, sometimes at the Manse. The Ladies Aid, with Mrs. E. A. Nygaard, its president, works with much enthusiasm and marked success. At their Fall Bazaar they sold goods for more than \$1,100 and yet there remained several valuable articles which will be disposed of at the Midwinter Sale.

Mrs. W. Mooney is the president of the Board of Deacons. The Deacons do noble work visiting the



sick and the aged, and otherwise helping and bringing cheer. Mr. J. Potter, an attorney, is the chairman of the Men's Club. The Sunday School is not large, but it is beautiful and effective. The choir meets every week at the Manse; they sang at the Blaine celebration last summer and were very well received. We are looking forward to the meeting of Synod here the first week of July. Our homes, our hearts, and our NEW CHURCH, will be open to you!

From a letter written by Rev. E. S. Brynjolfsson.

### *The Langruth Parish*

Langruth has not been doing too badly lately. In September we had the pleasure of having Rev. Harald S. Sigmar with us for one Sunday. We were indeed glad he was able to give us this service for it not only enabled us to hear his inspiring message, but also to bid him farewell before leaving for Washington. We all regret his leaving our Synod and sincerely hope that at some later date he can return to it.

During October we were happy to have Rev. Eric Sigmar and his wife Svava, also little Elynne with us. Svava was soloist at our service. Rev. Eric held a Communion Service. There were 37 communicants.

Monday evening Rev. Eric showed pictures of Europe and large parts of Iceland where they had visited. All who saw them enjoyed them immensely. Rev. Eric was to have been with us on November 6th, but because of a blinding blizzard we had to telephone him not to come. Winter really came with a bang.

November 27th we had Donald Wandersu, a theology student from Minneapolis North West Seminary. He arrived on the evening of the 24th and for the few days he was with us made his presence felt. As one parishioner remarked, we learn something new from every visiting pastor. Again the weather was unfavorable and we had a small attendance. Donald Wandersu is the making of a fine pastor and wherever he will be will do wonderful work.

We have a new church council: A. M. Johnson, pres.; A. M. Johannson, vice-pres.; Freeman Thordarson,

stewardship secretary; Mrs. Laura Finnbogason, secretary; V. Bjarnarson, treasurer; Mrs. G. F. Thordarson; Mrs. C. F. Lindal. Deaconesses: Mrs. V. Bjarnarson, Mrs. Geo. Scott, Mrs. B. Bjarnarson. Helgi Thompson was chosen delegate to the Synodical convention in Vancouver.

### *The Point Roberts Parish*

A lovely service was held at our church on October 30th, Reformation Sunday. Mr. E. Johnson, who, with his wife, accompanied Dr. and Mrs. Sigmar from Blaine, participated in the service.

Our annual bazaar, conducted by the L.A.C., was again a real success. Mrs. Jonas Thorsteinson was general chairman and with the help of her co-workers, she made it a very pleasant affair.

Our Thanksgiving Service was held on Sunday, November 27th. At the same time, Dr. Sigmar conducted a Confirmation Service when Kristin Gudrun Thorsteinson, Janice Louise Van Oosten and Marie Louise Solomon were confirmed. At the end of their service, the three girls sang "Bless This House" as a prayer before the altar. Communion was then partaken of by members of the congregation. Plans are now being made for our Christmas Service. It is hoped that we will be able to again render the Christmas cantata "Prepare Him Room". The date has been tentatively set as the 23rd.

Our Sunday School attendance continues about the same. Most of our Canadian visitors have left by now. Plans are now made for our annual Christmas Candle-lite Service, which will be held on the evening of December 18th.

We wish all our readers a Happy Yuletide Season and a prosperous New Year.

### *St. Stephen's Lutheran Church Silver Heights, Winnipeg*

God has truly been blessing our work here in Silver Heights! There is much enthusiasm shown in attendance at services, desire to serve on committees, and participate in the activity of the congregation which will be formally organized shortly after the New Year. Average attendance for the last two months at



services has been over 70! And our Sunday School enrollment is now 65 with a majority of that group attending regularly. We are still meeting in the beautiful Y.M.C.A. in St. James, and will do so until we build our church. We now have a beautiful parsonage right in Silver Heights. We were able to secure a loan from the Board of Missions of our U.L.C.A. to make this possible, and our people will be making monthly payments on this loan. The pastor and his family are living in the parsonage at 151 Garrioch. After the congregation is organized, the President of our Synod will dedicate the parsonage. Recently all of the people affiliated with our congregation, which we have voted to call "St. Stephen's Lutheran Church", came in a body to the parsonage and surprised the pastor and his wife with a "house warming". They brought a beautiful desk chair for the pastor's study, and a lamp for the living room, and lovely refreshments for everyone. The Sunday School is now busy preparing for their Christmas program on December 18th.

### *The Mountain Parish*

The Mountain Lutheran Congregation, having the oldest Icelandic Lutheran Church in America, have begun work on improvements necessary to preserve it. A new concrete floor has been poured in the basement and further work is scheduled to be started in earnest immediately following the holidays. All labor on this project is to be donated. These improvements will make our church both more beautiful and more comfortable.

The annual meeting of the congregation was held on Saturday, November 12th. The Constitution, which had been translated into English by Kristbjorg Kristjanson, was read at this meeting by Gilsi Halldorson. It was also read in Icelandic by Rev. Skulason. Several changes were suggested to be carried out at a later meeting. New officers were elected and reports given. Rev. Skulason gave a report on the year's work. The congregation went on record to thank Rev. Skulason for his very splendid work in the community.

Mrs. Wm. Olgeirsson, our organist, has organized both a junior and a senior choir. The response in both choirs has been very enthusiastic. The choirs are now preparing for the Christmas services.

Rev. Skulason held a Children's Service December 6th with the Sunday School children participating. The Sunday School Awards for perfect attendance were given. There were sixty-one awards given. Twelve students received Bibles for three years perfect attendance. Jacqueline Thorfinson, who has served as Sunday School secretary for the past two years, received an award for twelve years perfect attendance. The Junior choir performed for this service.

### *First Lutheran, Winnipeg*

The annual meeting of the First Lutheran Church, Winnipeg, was held on December 6th. The reports of the official boards and auxiliary organizations showed the congregation to be in a healthy condition. The total receipts for the year amounted to \$17,508, and the expenditures were \$12,775, of which \$1,350 was paid for benevolence. Ninety-four public services had been held in the Church during the year, 50 baptisms performed, 45 burials conducted, 43 weddings, and Holy Communion administered to 352 persons. The Senior Ladies Aid of the Church gave \$702.00 to Bethel Old Folks Home during the year, \$500.00 of which is a special gift to the New Bethel Building Fund. E. G. Eggertson is the president of the congregation, while former Alderman Paul Bardal is the chairman of the Board of Deacons.

Mrs. Laufey Olson, the widow of the late Rev. Carl J. Olson is now taking the course for Parish Worker and Director of Religious Education at the Baltimore Deaconess School. Her address is 1100 Boyce Avenue, Ruxton 4, Md.

### *United Lutheran, Cavalier*

The Sunday School of United Lutheran started its year with an all-time high enrollment of 132 pupils. There are 14 teachers in the School. An Adults' Bible Study Class, led by Cliff Olson, began this fall and is continuing with success.

The Ladies Aid had the floor of the church basement tiled early this fall. The Aid also hired someone to clean the church each week. The women of the Aid served lunch at the dedication of the new parsonage on October 23rd; and at that time presented Pastor and Mrs. Guttormsson with a large beautiful mirror.

The Brotherhood of United Lutheran conducted the "Loyalty Sunday" program on November 6th. The budget for 1956 was presented and the members of the congregation pledged their support of the work of the Church during the Worship Service. Afterward, the men went out and contacted those who were absent from the Service, and obtained their pledges. The result was that the following amounts were pledged for 1956: for the work of the local congregation, approximately \$6,000.00; for Benevolence (work of the Church-at-large), approximately \$1,200.00.

During November the congregation purchased a new electric organ, an "Allen". This purchase was made possible, to a large extent, by memorial gifts to the Organ Fund. The organist is Mrs. Cliff Erickson.

The Senior Luther League sponsored the showing of the "Martin Luther" film twice in November. This was the full-length feature movie that has been showing so successfully all over the world. The Leaguers realized close to \$60 from the offerings, which they gave to the Organ Fund. They estimated that 300 people saw the movie at the two showings. The Leaguers also sponsored the Thanksgiving Clothing Appeal of Lutheran World Relief, and were able to deliver eight huge boxes of clothing to the box car that was loaded in Grand Forks Dec. 1st.

On November 13th, United Lutheran received 10 new members into its fellowship (five adults and five children). On the following Sunday, at the annual meeting of the congregation, Pastor Guttormsson announced that the membership of the congregation had reached 320 baptized members. This includes 131 Child members and 189 Confirmed members. The Communing membership is 120. There are approximately 80 families in the congregation.

On November 29th, Miss Eleanor Gillstrom met with the Sunday School teachers and the officers of congregational organizations for an evaluation of our parish program of education. The outcome of the evaluation was the decision to develop and keep up a card index file on all the child members of the church, and to endeavor to set up a congregational Parish Education Committee.

The Church Council was installed on December 4th. At its organizational meeting, the Council elected and appointed these men to their position: Percy Morrison, president; Vic Cook, vice-president and chairman of property committee; Neal McClure, secretary; Emory Awes, treasurer; Craig Hertsgaard, chairman of membership and evangelism committee; Jake Erlendson, chairman of stewardship committee; and Cliff Olson, chairman of Parish Education Committee.

### *The Fjalla Parish*

The congregation of Fjalla Church met in the Legion Hall of Milton, Sunday, November 13th, to honor their pastor and his wife, Rev. and Mrs. Olafur Skulason, and to honor Herman Bjarnason, who has served as secretary for the congregation from January 1901 to January 1953.

A. G. Magnuson was chairman for the program. Mrs. G. S. Goodman sang "Bless This House", accompanied by Bernadine Wild.

Betty Goodman played a piano solo, "Ingeborg". Ina and Sharon Brown sang "In the Garden" accompanied by their mother, Mrs. Lynn Brown; and Irene, Janet and Charlotte Goodman sang "Whispering Hope", accompanied by their mother, Mrs. John Goodman.

Rev. Skulason presented Mr. Bjarnason with a wrist watch on behalf of the congregation, and A. G. Magnuson presented Rev. and Mrs. Skulason with a gift of money on behalf of the congregation. At the close of the program the Fjalla Ladies Aid served refreshments.

Rev. and Mrs. Skulason arrived from Iceland this summer to take charge of the Fjalla Church of Cavalier County and several other churches in Pembina County.

## THE SYNOD TREASURER SPEAKS:—

Receipts for this present 1955-56 Synodical Year to Date, December 5, 1955

		Lutheran	
	Apportionment	World Action	Other Causes
Gimli .....	\$103.78	\$67.85	\$170.42
Blaine .....	110.00		
Langruth .....	120.00	35.00	
Cavalier .....	360.57		36.20
Vidalins .....			11.05
Hallson .....			4.30
Peters .....			2.45
Vikur, Mountain, N.D. ....	26.46		
Bru, Cypress River, Man. ....	35.00	10.00	
Concordia, Churchbridge, Sask. ....	25.00		
First Lutheran, Winnipeg .....	20.00	10.00	
Vancouver .....	25.00		
Vidines, Husavick .....			57.86
Lincoln Church, Minn. ....	142.67		
In loving memory of Miss			
Carole Stone for Missions.....	10.00		

### VANCOUVER CONVENTION, JULY 4th, 1956

The Canadian Pacific Railway has now placed an order for two brand new tourist pullmans that will arrive in Winnipeg to leave here for Vancouver attached to the "Dominion" on July 2nd, 1956. This time of year is very crowded for transportation on all railways. These advance arrangements are made in your interest. Anyone can go with us whether delegate or not, provided they leave on board this train. They can get the same special rates. You will have thirty days return privileges and can return on the "Canadian" which is the super train of the Canadian Pacific Railway. Early reservations are accepted and they will receive priority berths on this train. Remember, it is cheaper to travel by this train and the accommodations are the finest obtainable.

N. O. BARDAL

### THE STEWARDSHIP SECRETARY SPEAKS

(Continued from Page 1)

to join the membership of His Church.

- d) Helping these newly won people to find a place in the life and fellowship of the Church.

Sweazey calls this a four-fold program of "Contact, Cultivation, Commitment and Conservation". It is certainly not "fly-by-night", "sheer emotionalism", or "babbling in tongues". Our Church is giving us a sound, sane, workable plan by

which to seek out and win for Christ the people He died to save.

There is no better time to study and plan for the carrying out of this program than now . . . in the Christmas season. Christ came into this world to save all sinners; we are spiritually conceited if we think He came only for us. Let our Evangelism begin with the Christmas carol, "Joy to the World". May we be so inspired by the "wonders of His love", that we purposefully bring Christ to our neighbors so they too may receive their King.

S. T. GUTTORMSSON.